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Burroughs

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(54) **HUMAN FLYING APPARATUS**

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This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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A63G 21/20	(2006.01)
B61B 3/00	(2006.01)
B61B 12/00	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***A63G 21/20*** (2013.01); ***A63G 7/00*** (2013.01); ***B61B 3/00*** (2013.01); ***B61B 12/00*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC A63G 21/20; A63G 21/22; A63G 7/00
USPC ..... 104/53, 89, 91, 94, 112, 113, 115, 124, 104/125; 244/4 A
See application file for complete search history.

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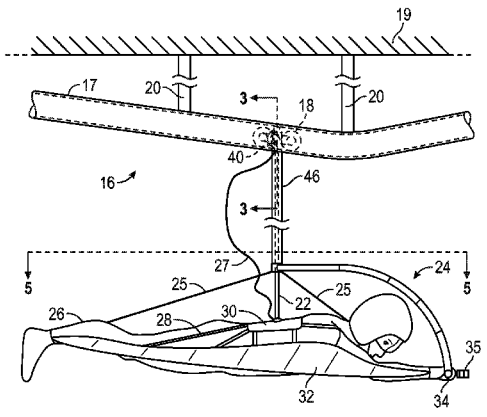
(57) **ABSTRACT**

The lever, wheel and axle, pulley, wedge, screw, and inclined plane are the six Simple Machines of the Classical era. Over 2000 years ago a man from Syracuse used them to create a way to move water against the pull of gravity. The Archimedes' screw is still a standard for simple efficiency. In homage to those early machines and the dreamers who built them, the Human Flying Apparatus provides a carriage, wheels and an axle, a harness, and a braking and steering_ system and, in specific embodiments, thrusters, all suspended from a single rail, which allows a human being to soar in simulated flight that is_safe, sustained, and suitable for all skill levels.

"For once you have tasted flight, you will walk the Earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you long to return."
Leonardo Da Vinci

7 Claims, 18 Drawing Sheets



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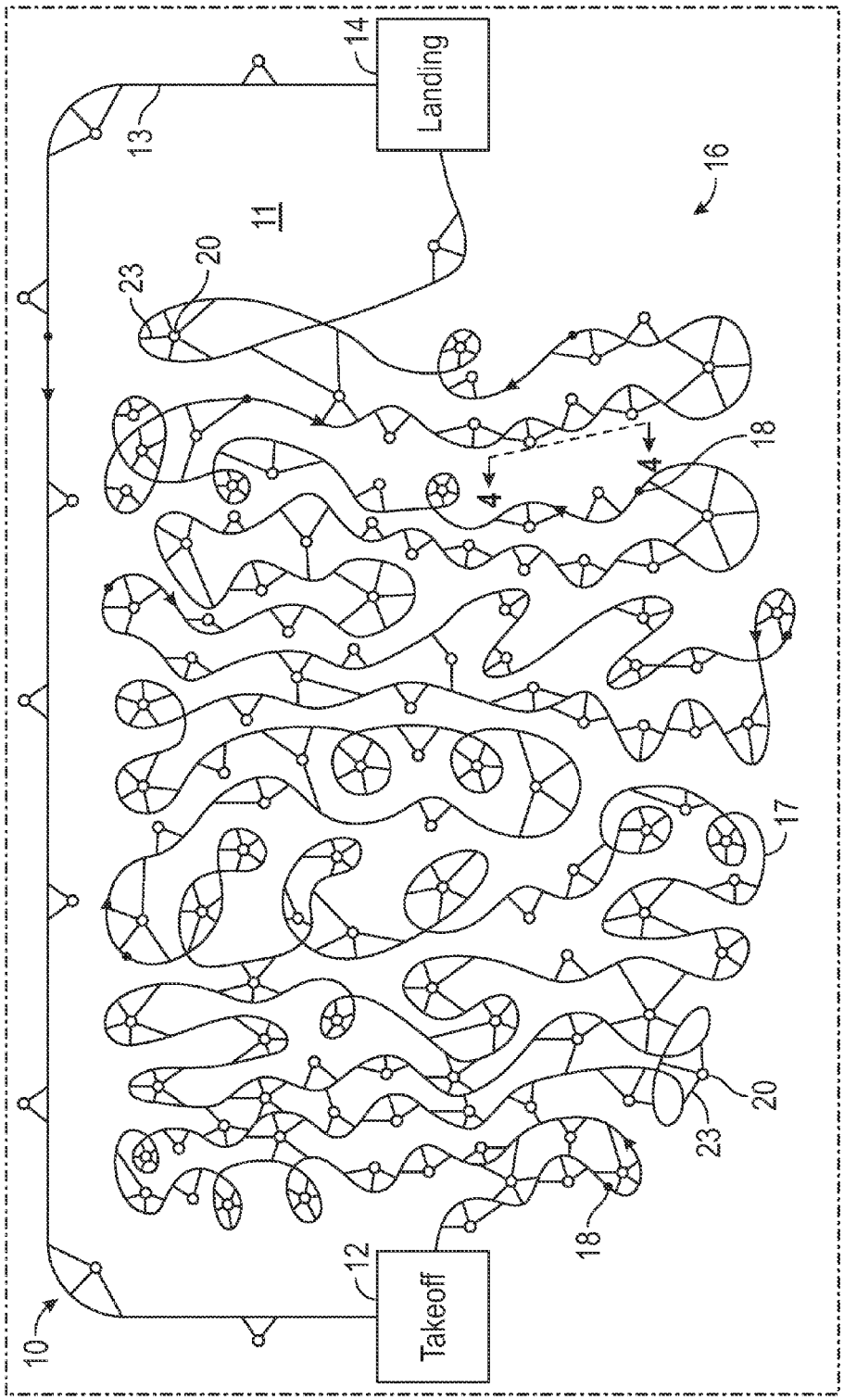


FIG. 1A

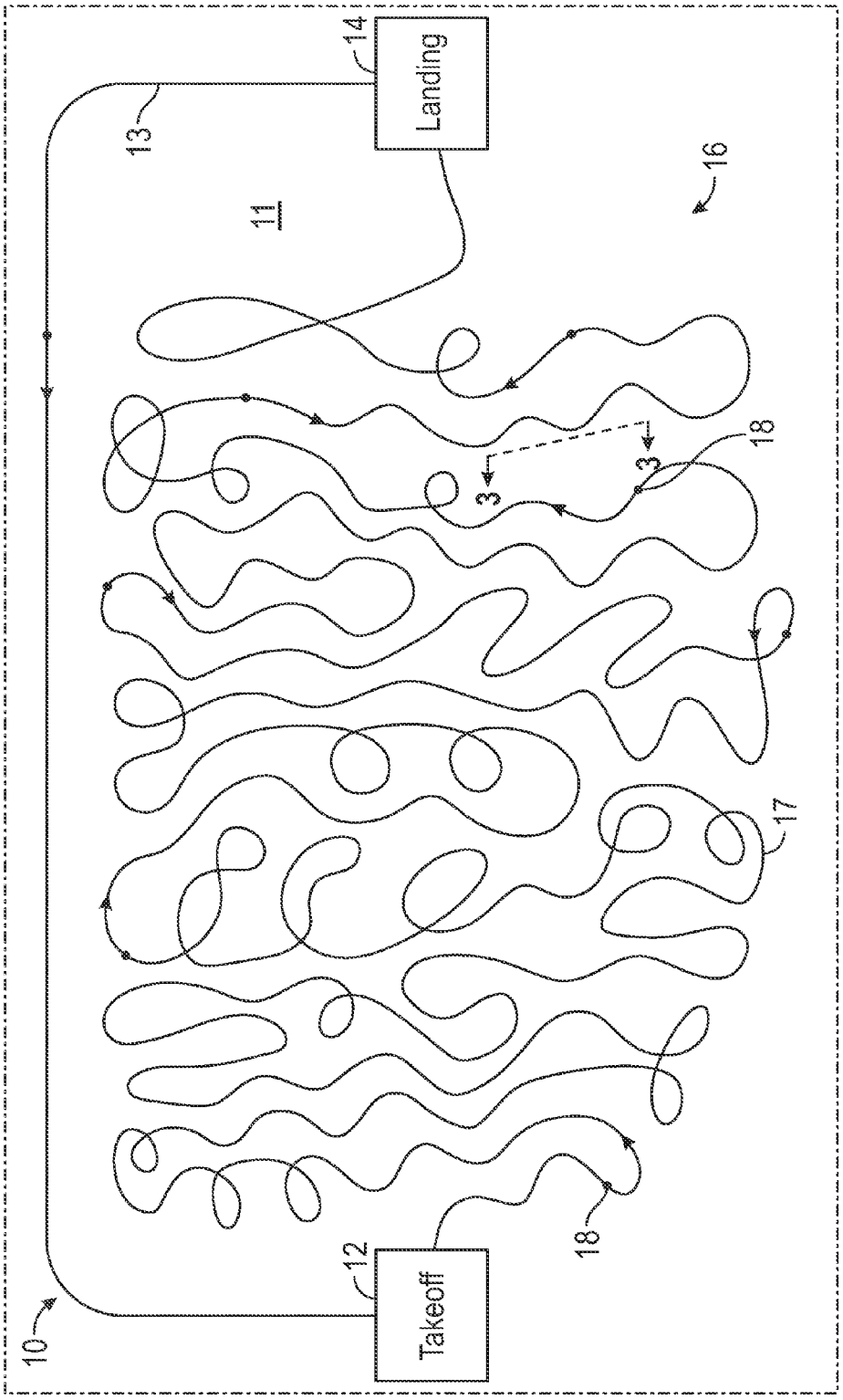
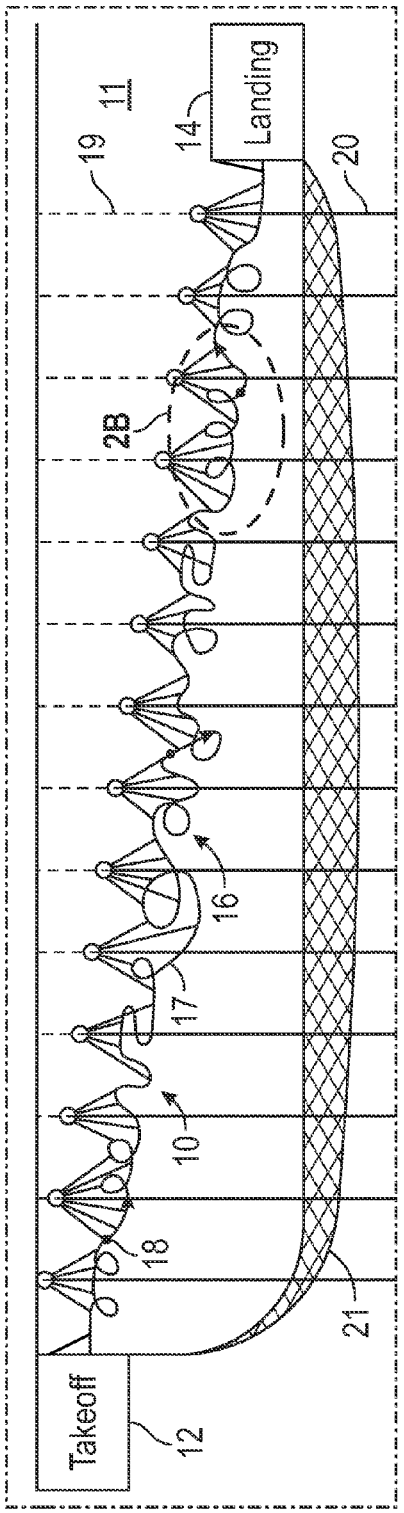


FIG. 1B


Takeoff
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Landing
14
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2B
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FIG. 2A

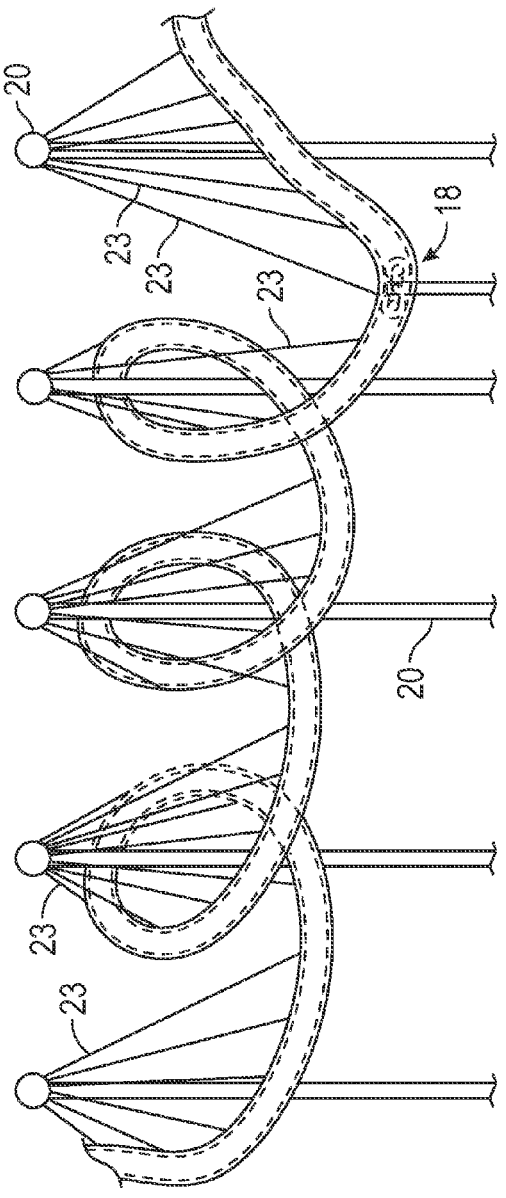
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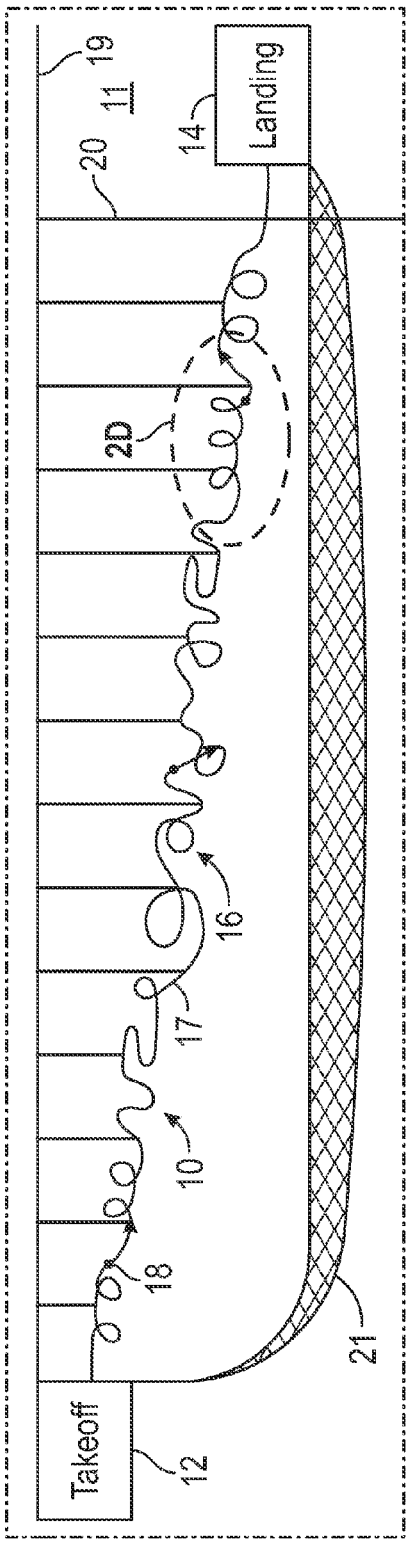
FIG. 2B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Landing
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Takeoff
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FIG. 2C

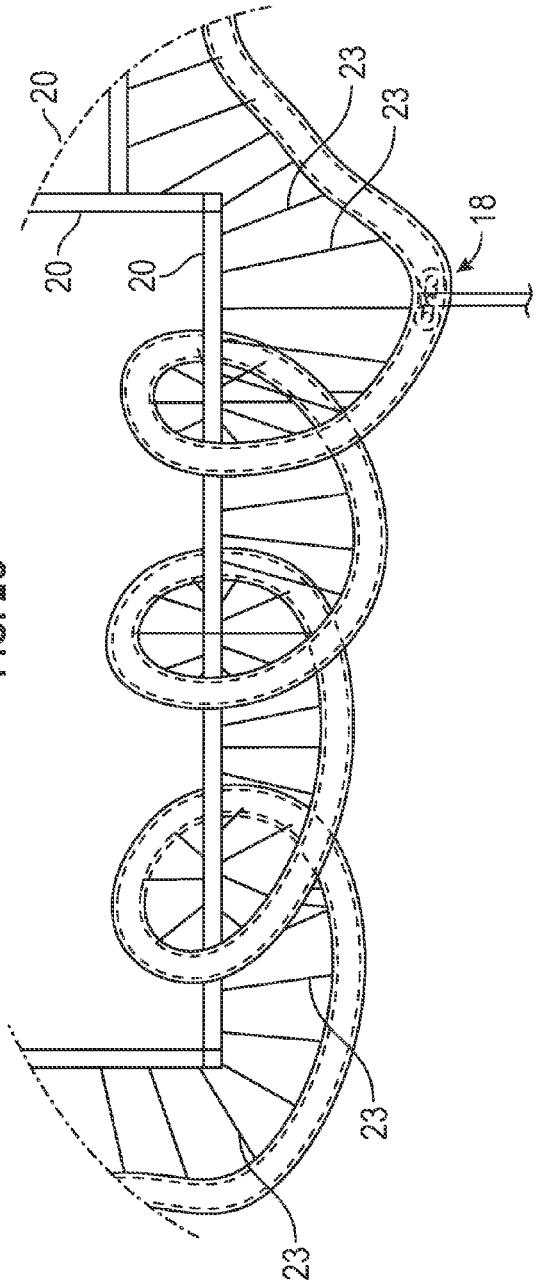
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FIG. 2D

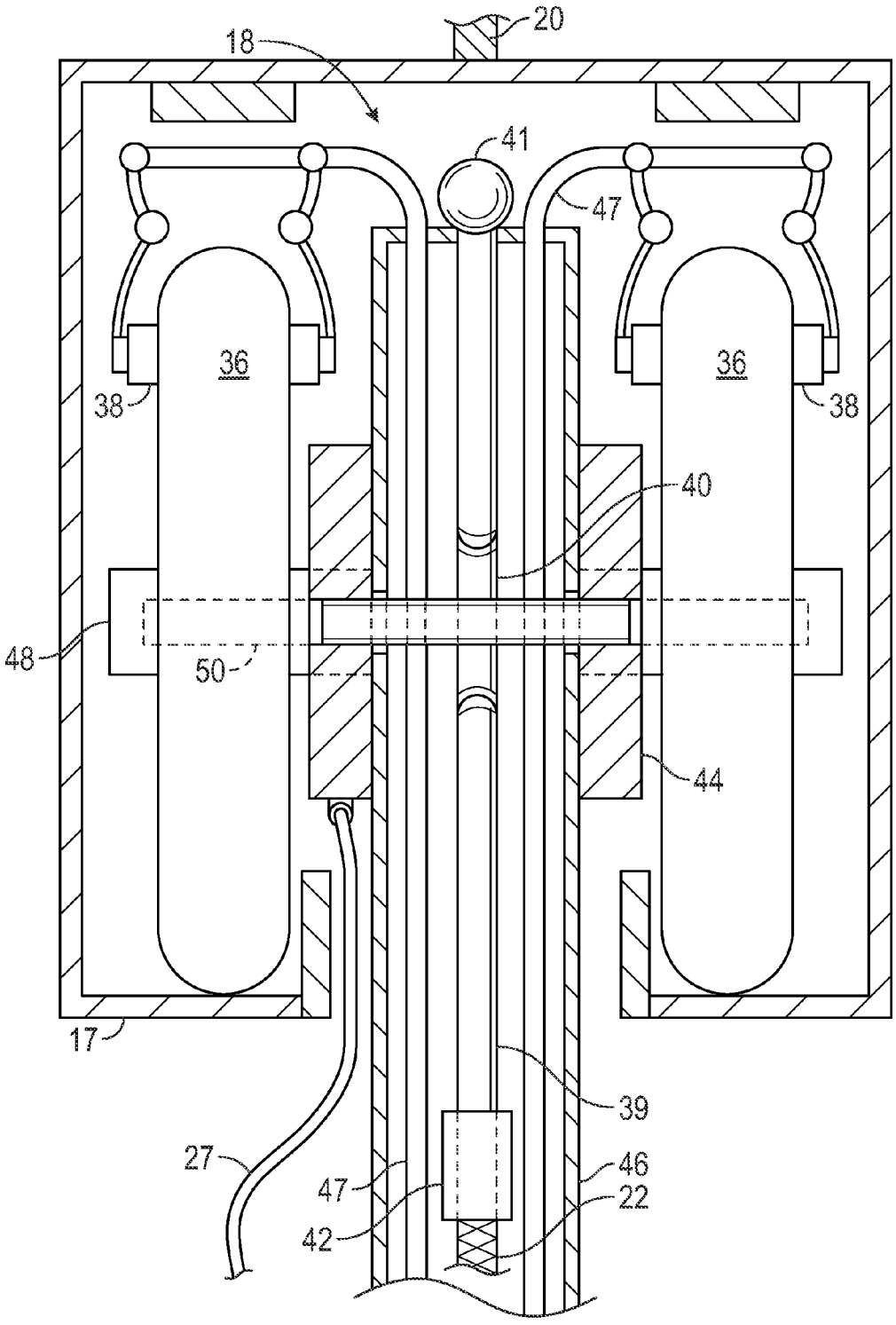

FIG. 3

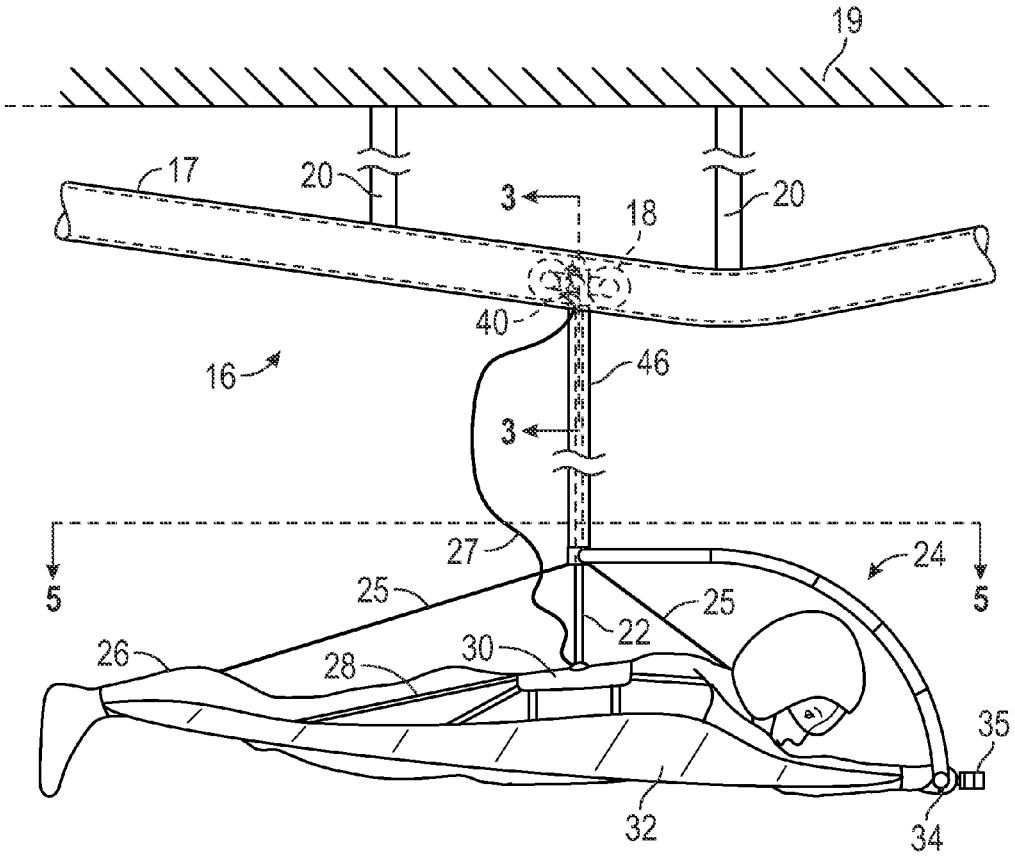
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FIG. 4

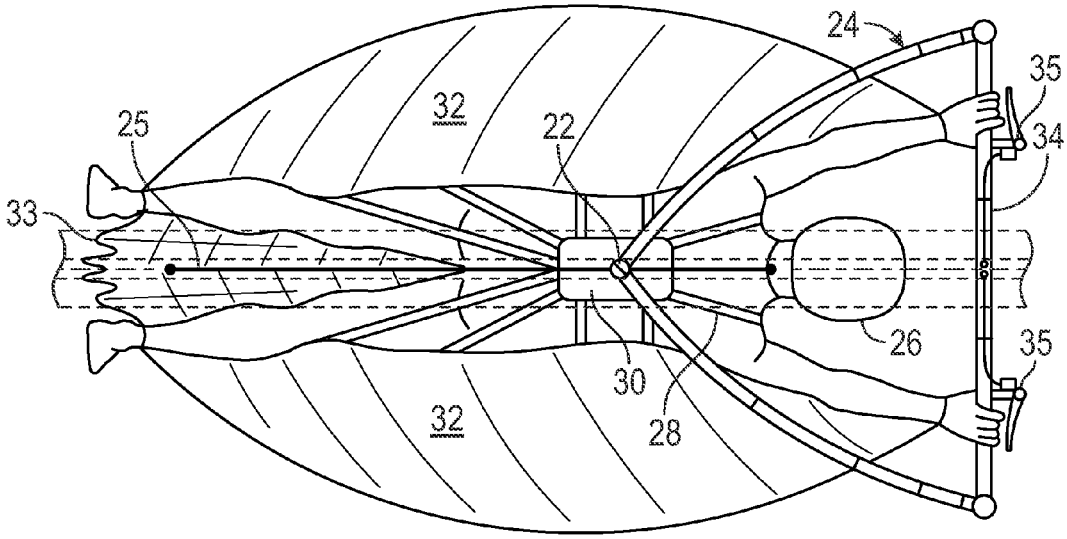
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FIG. 5

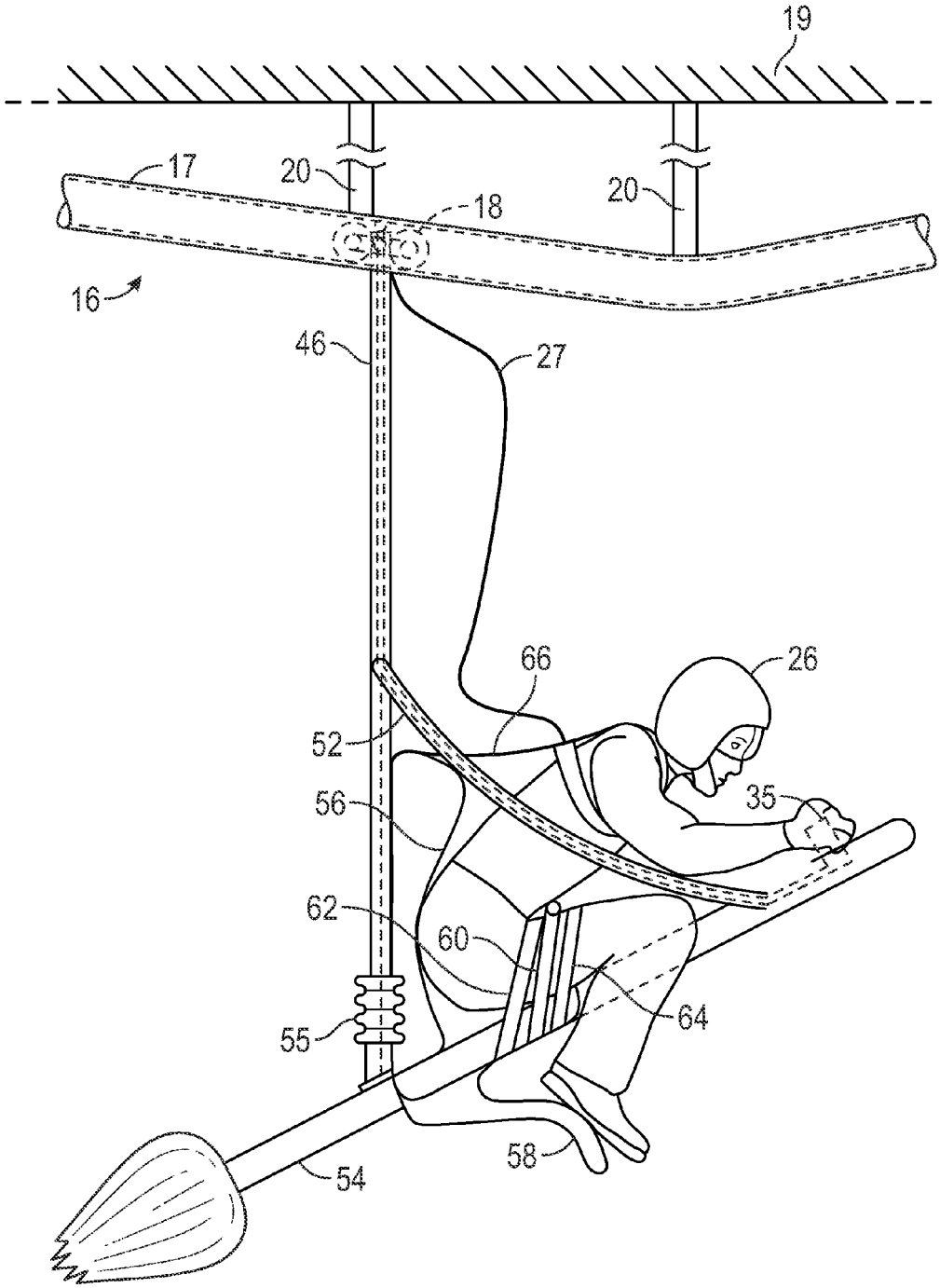

FIG. 6

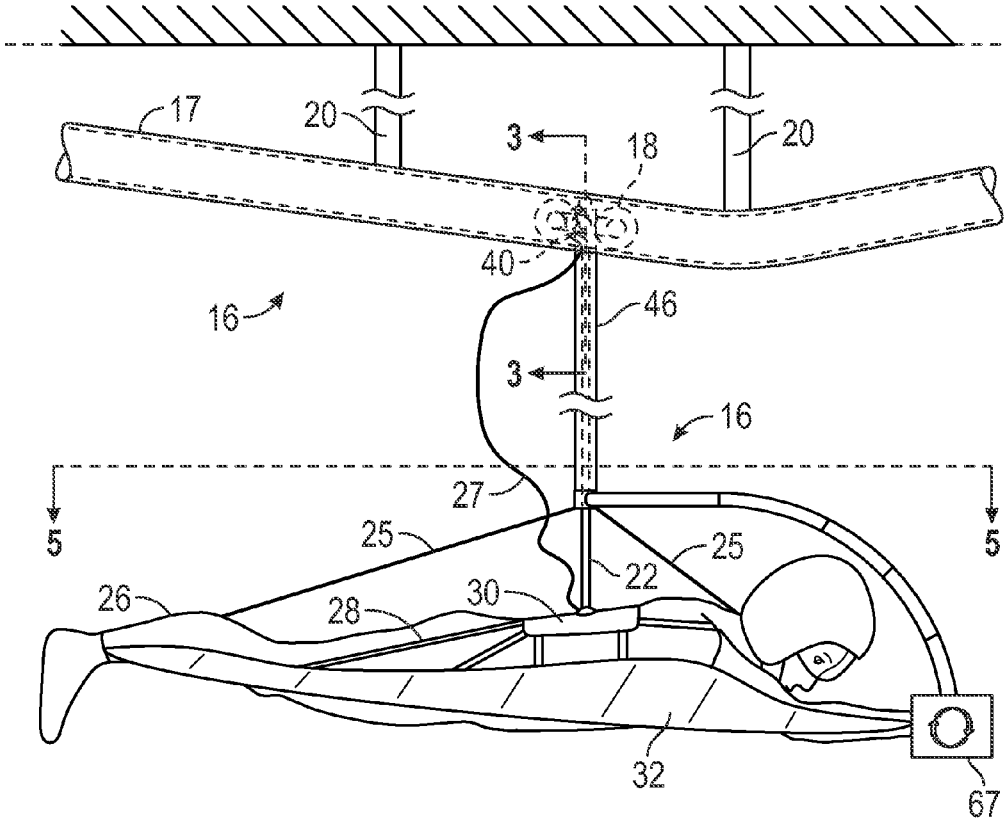
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FIG. 7

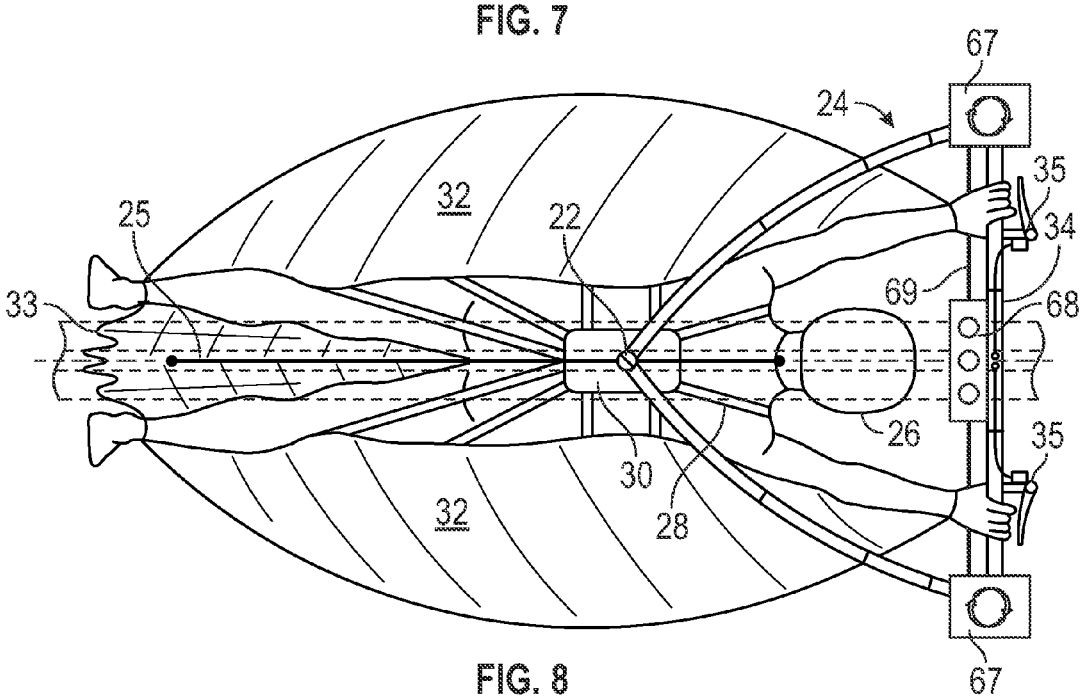
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FIG. 8

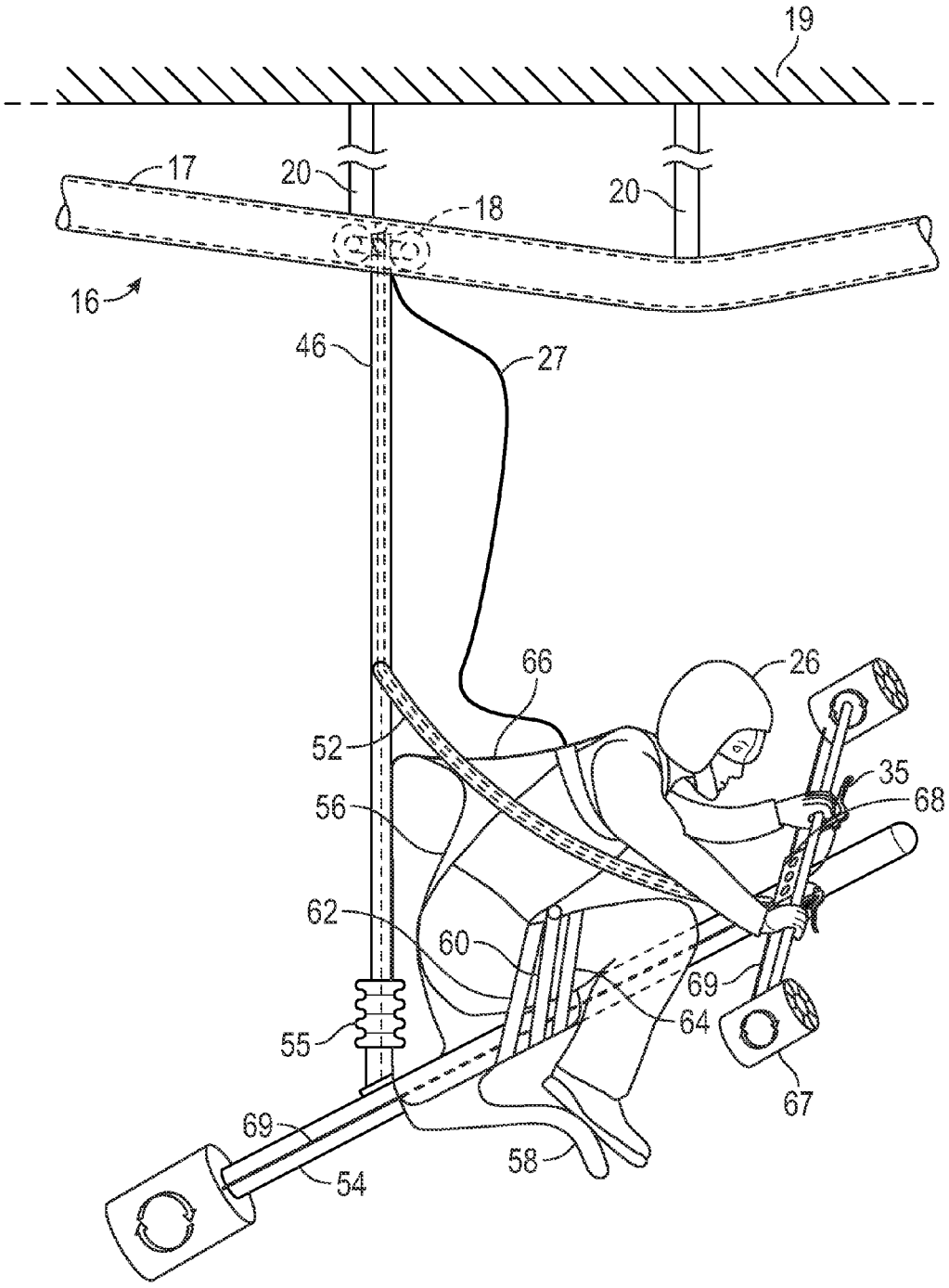

FIG. 9

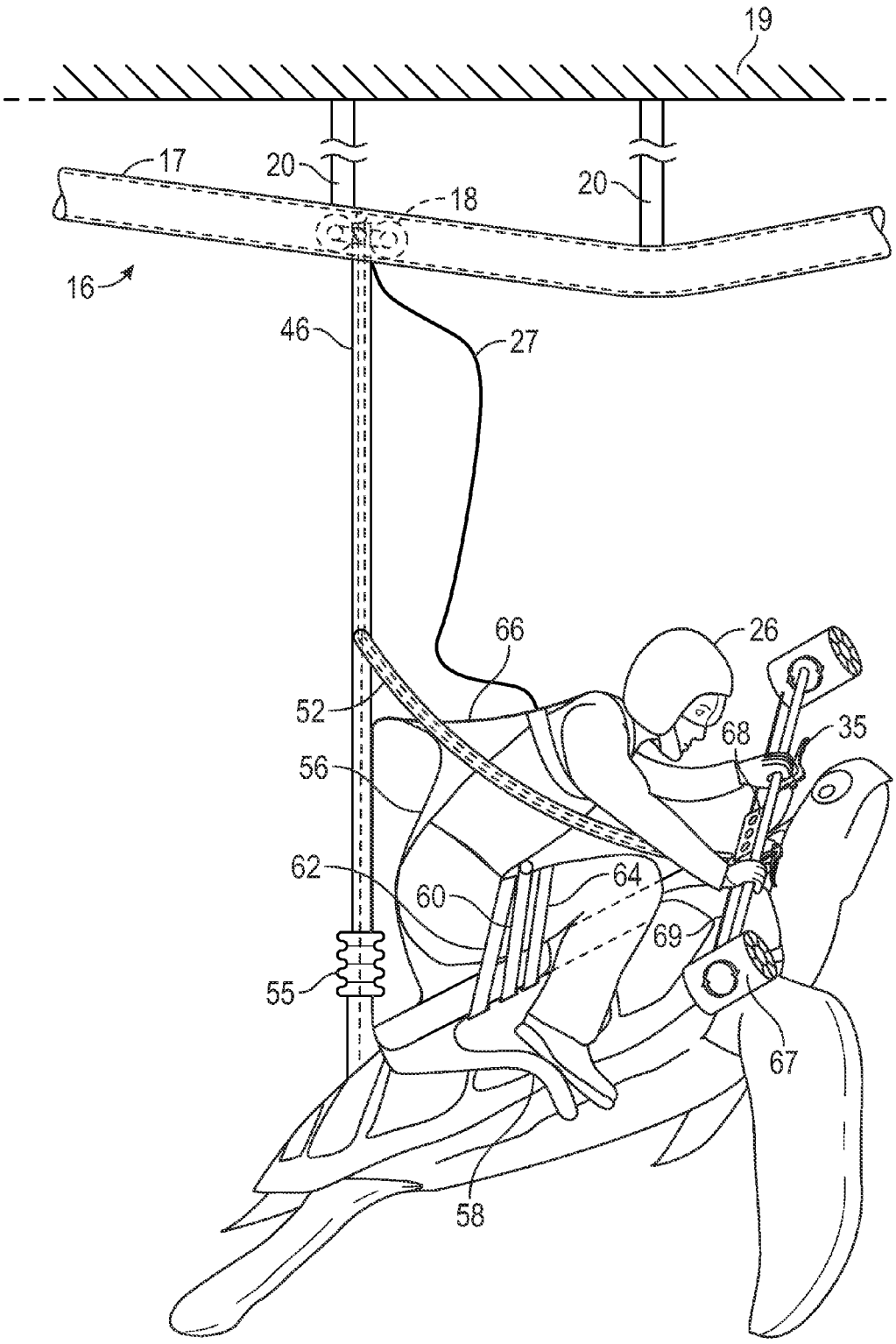

FIG. 10

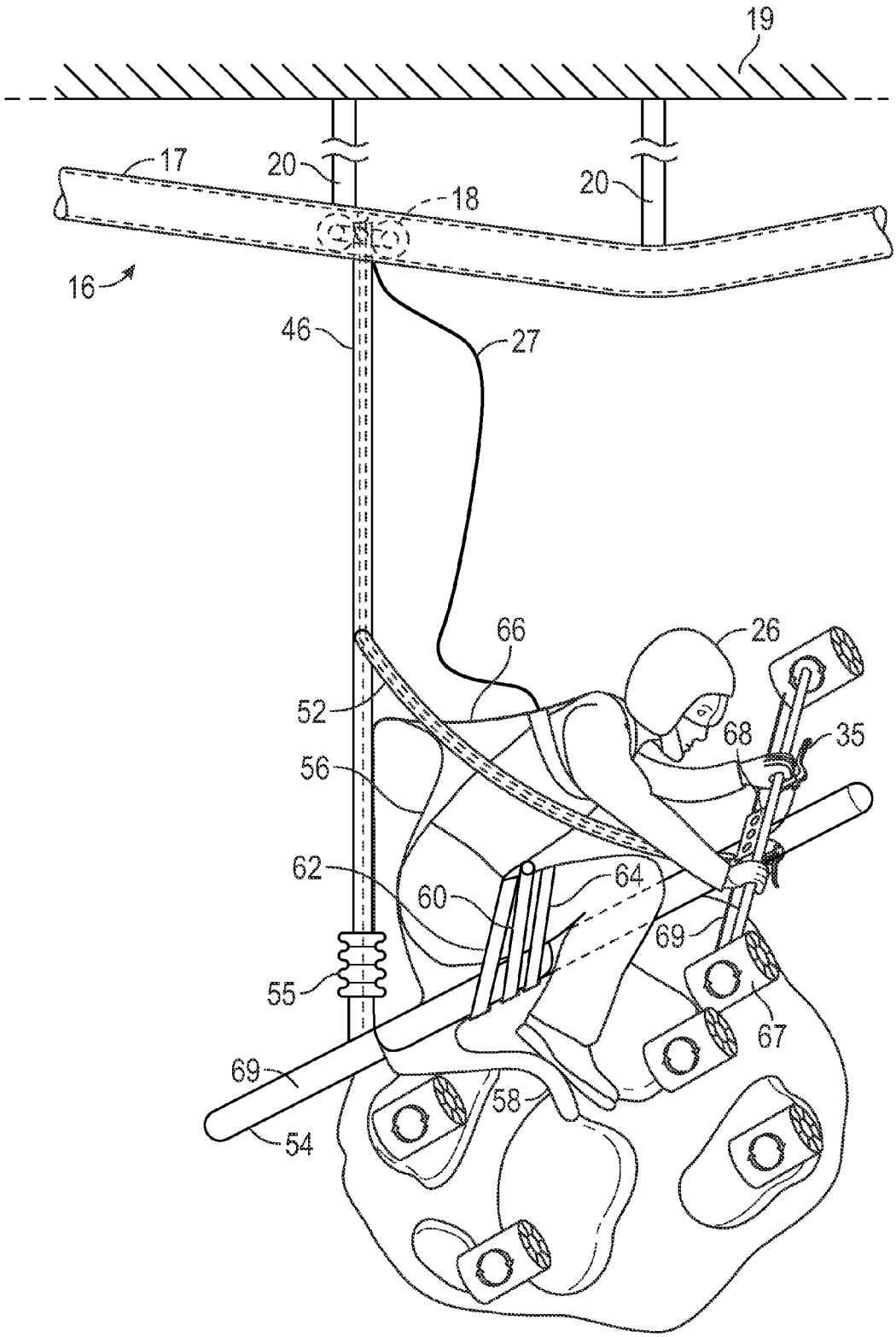

FIG. 11

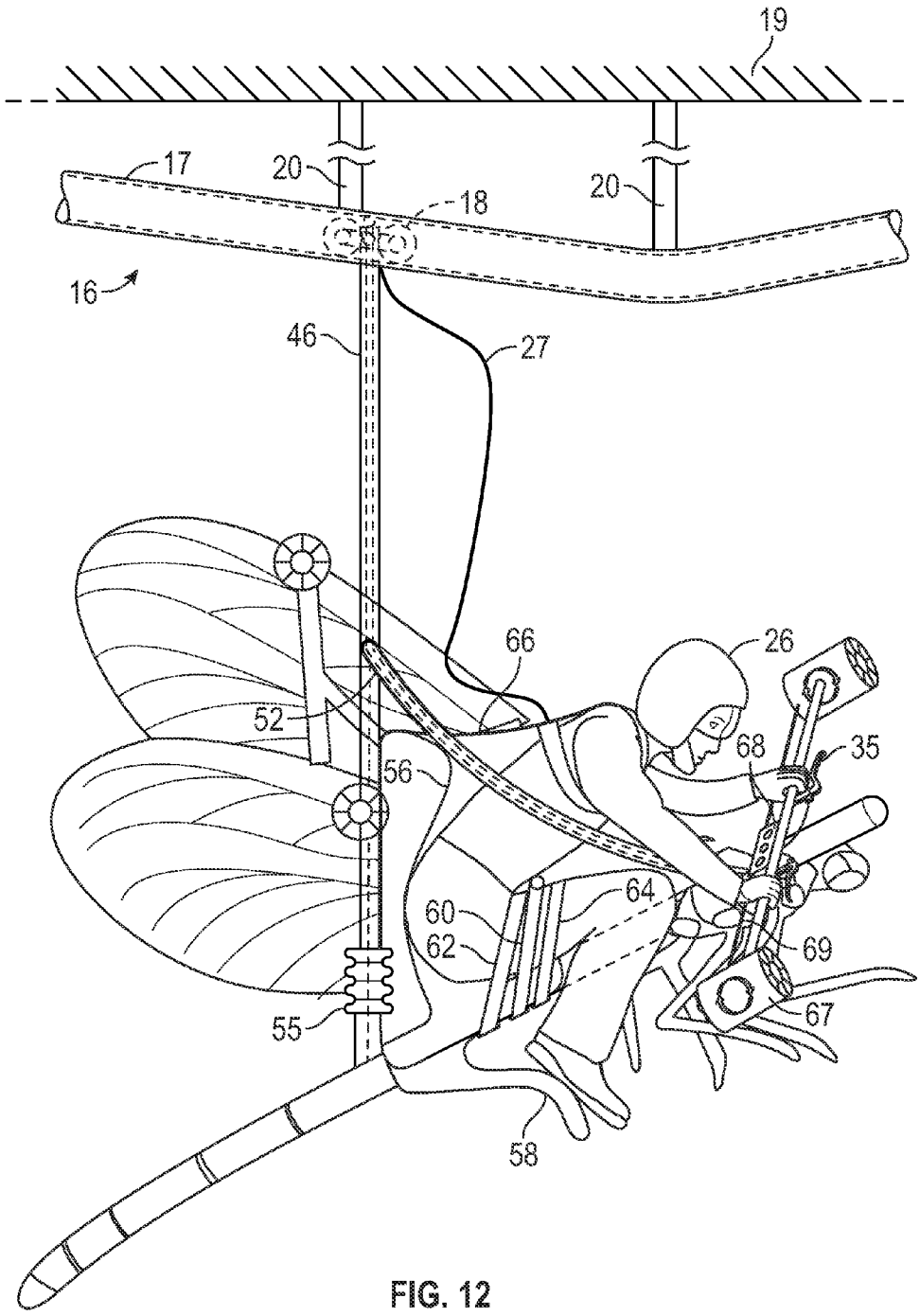

FIG. 12

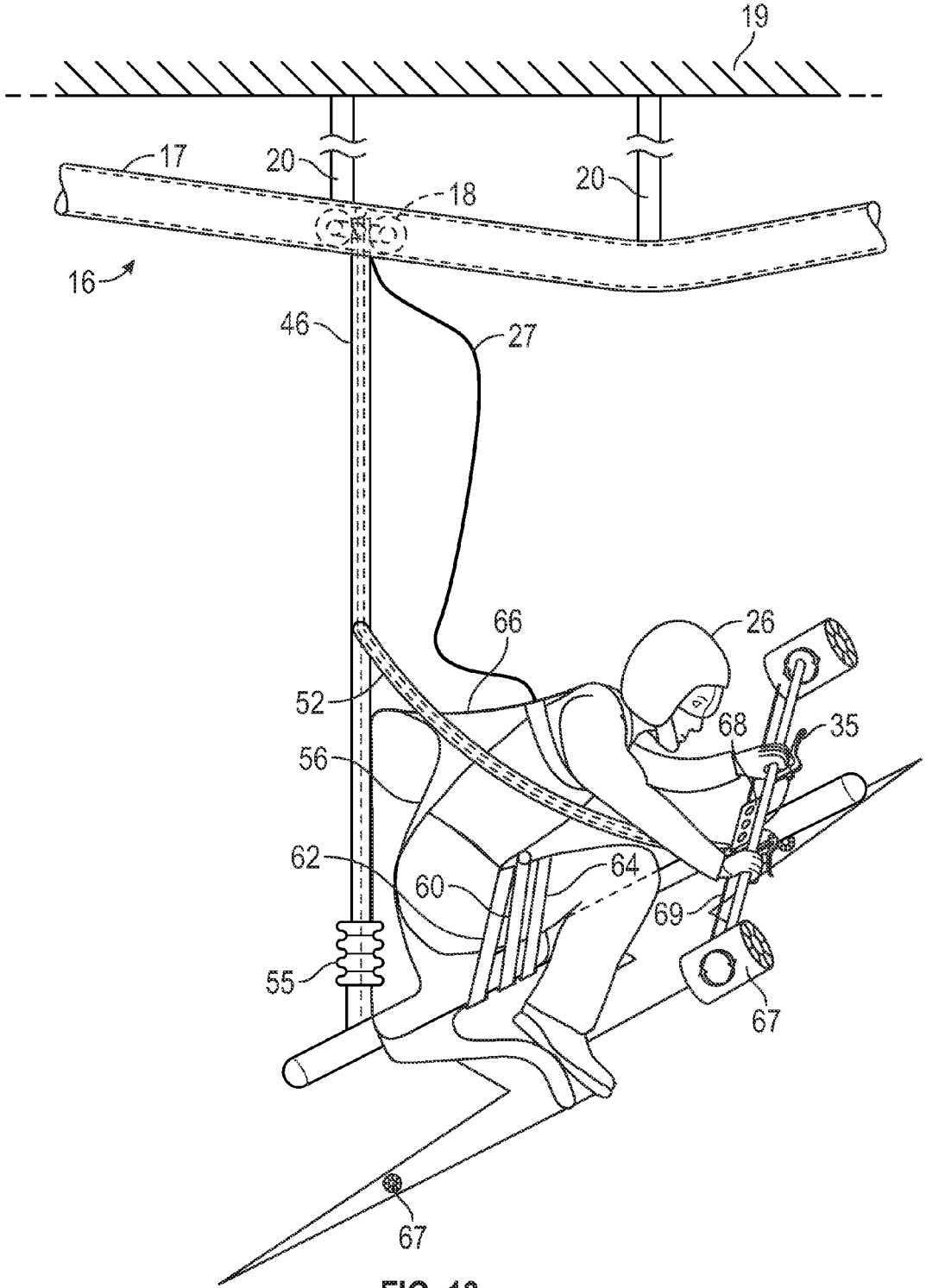

FIG. 13

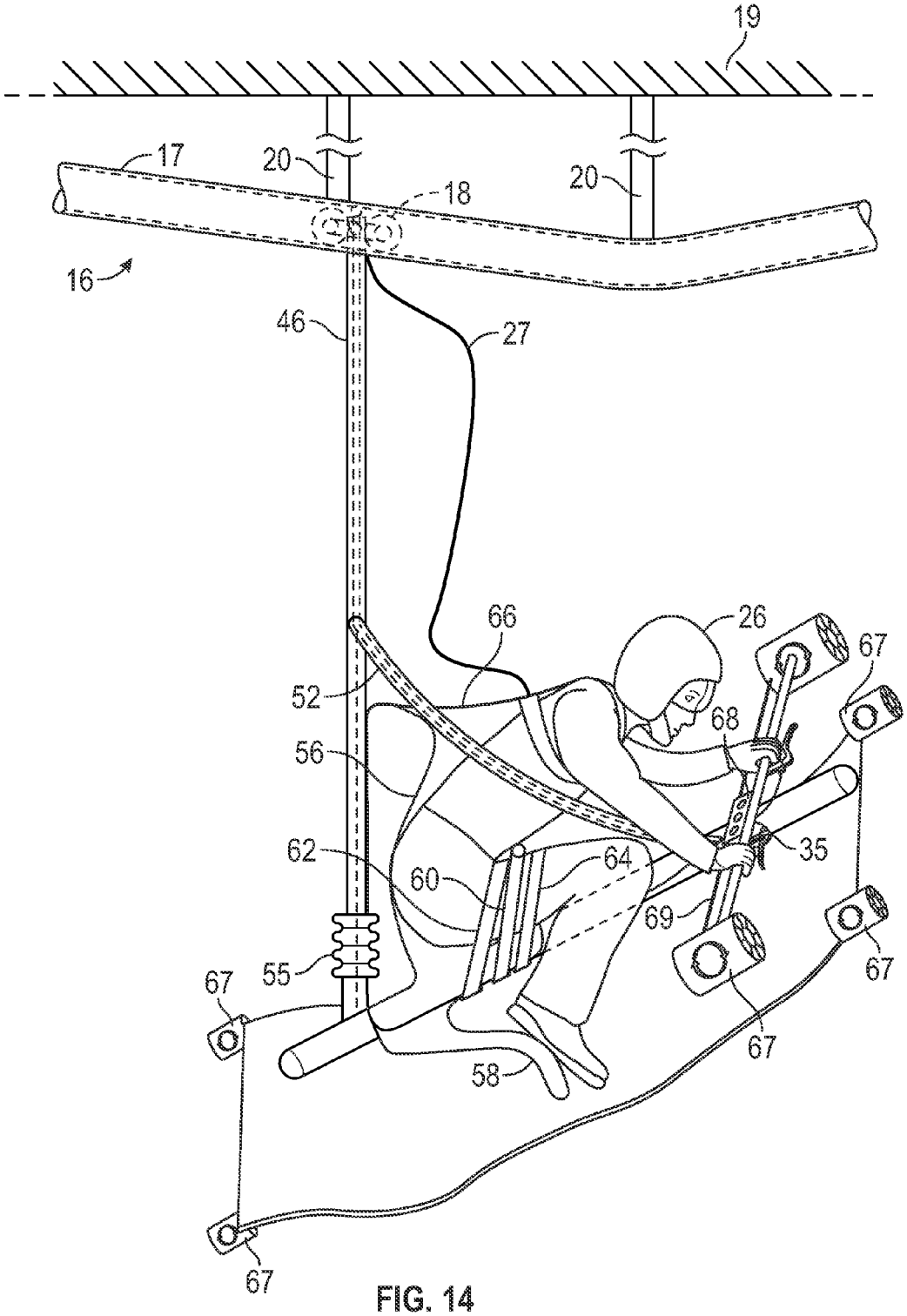
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FIG. 14

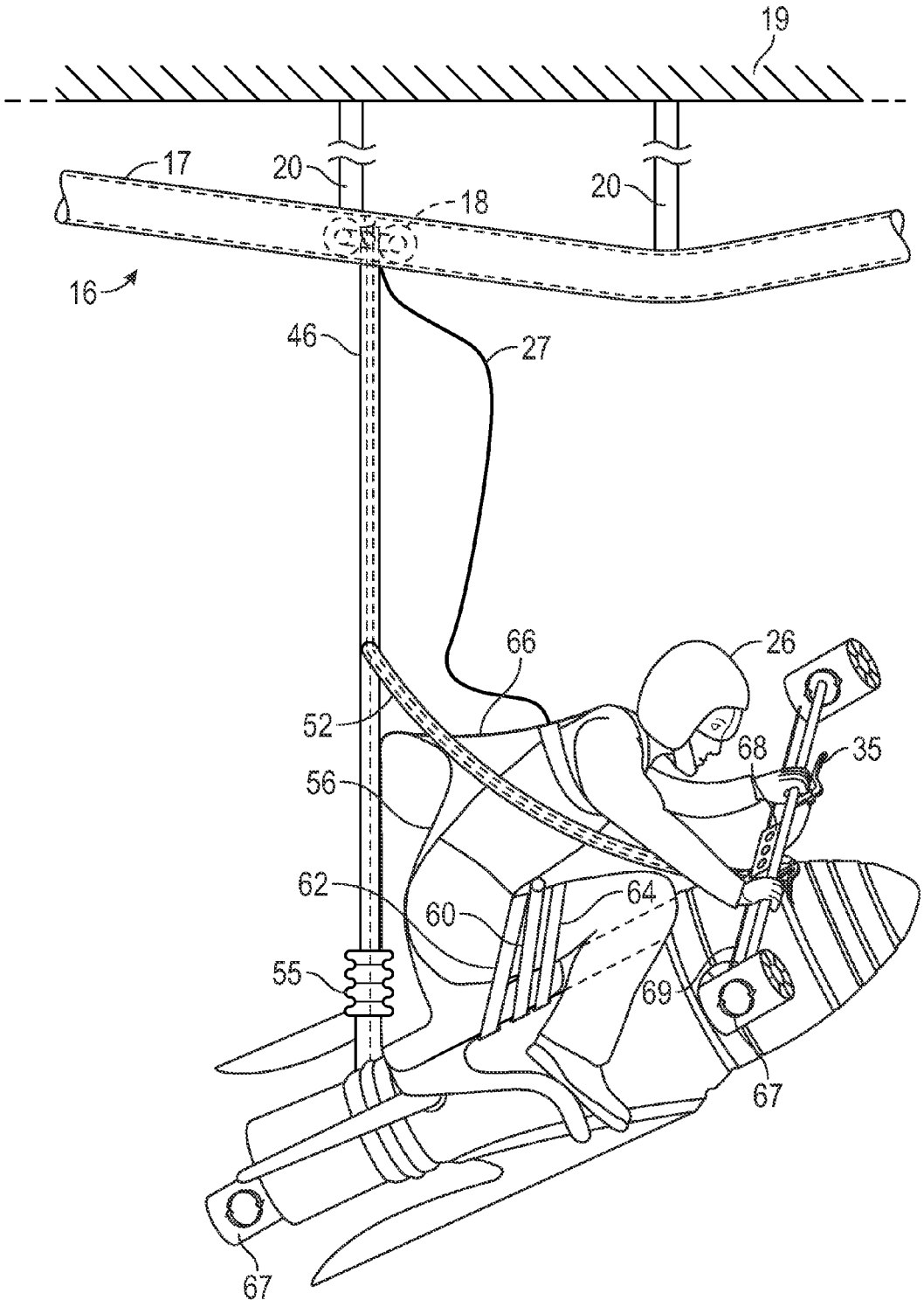

FIG. 15

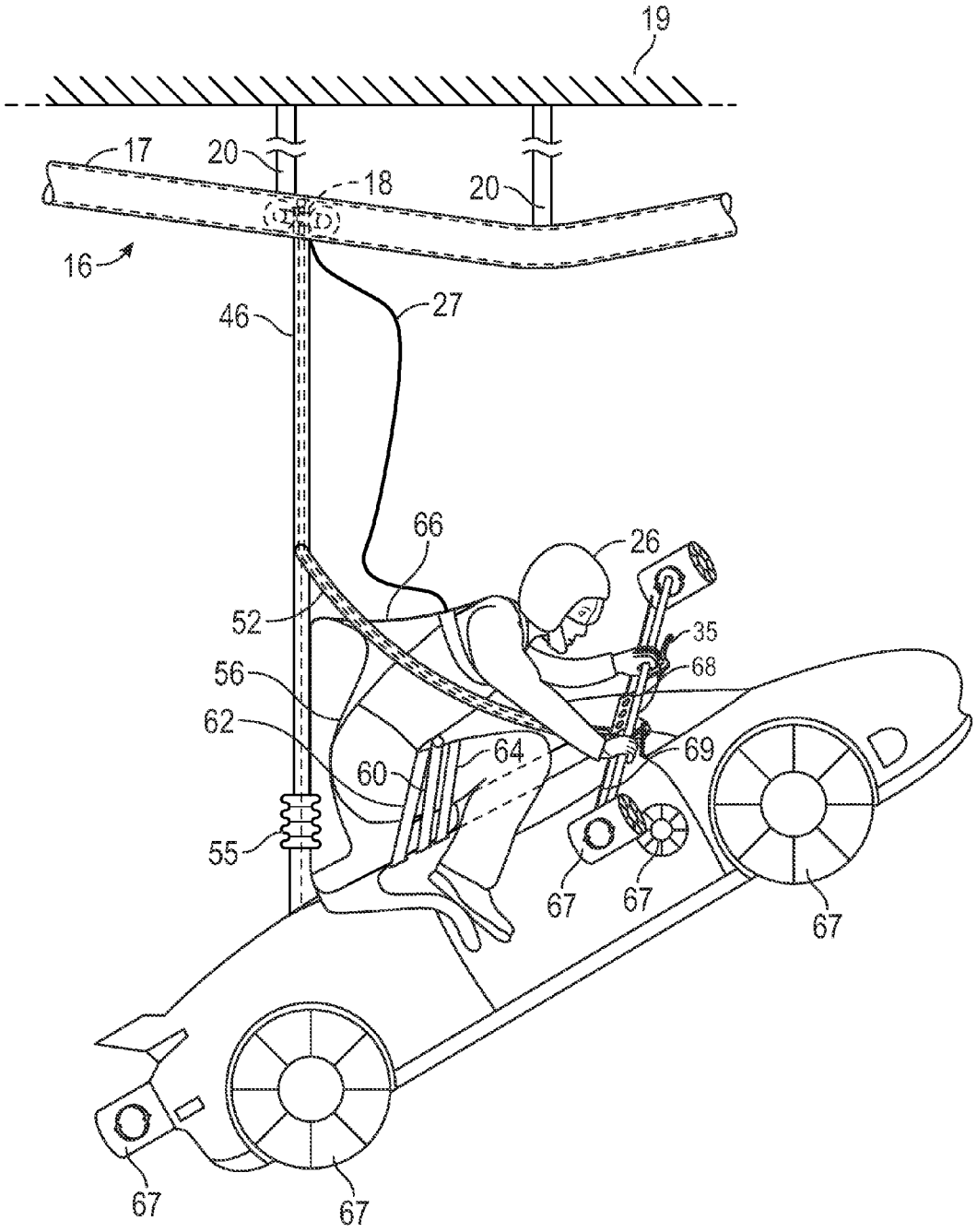

FIG. 16

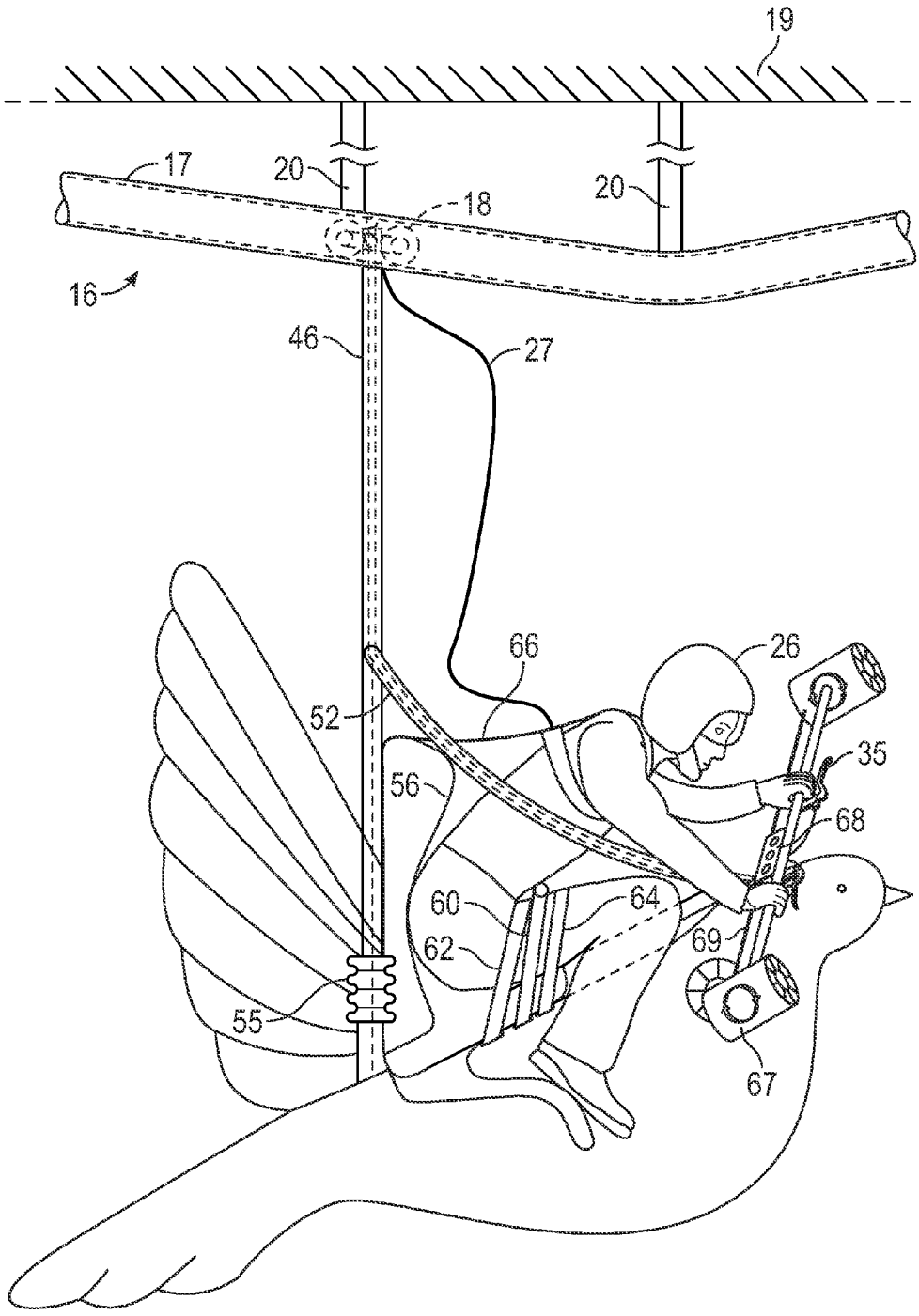

FIG. 17

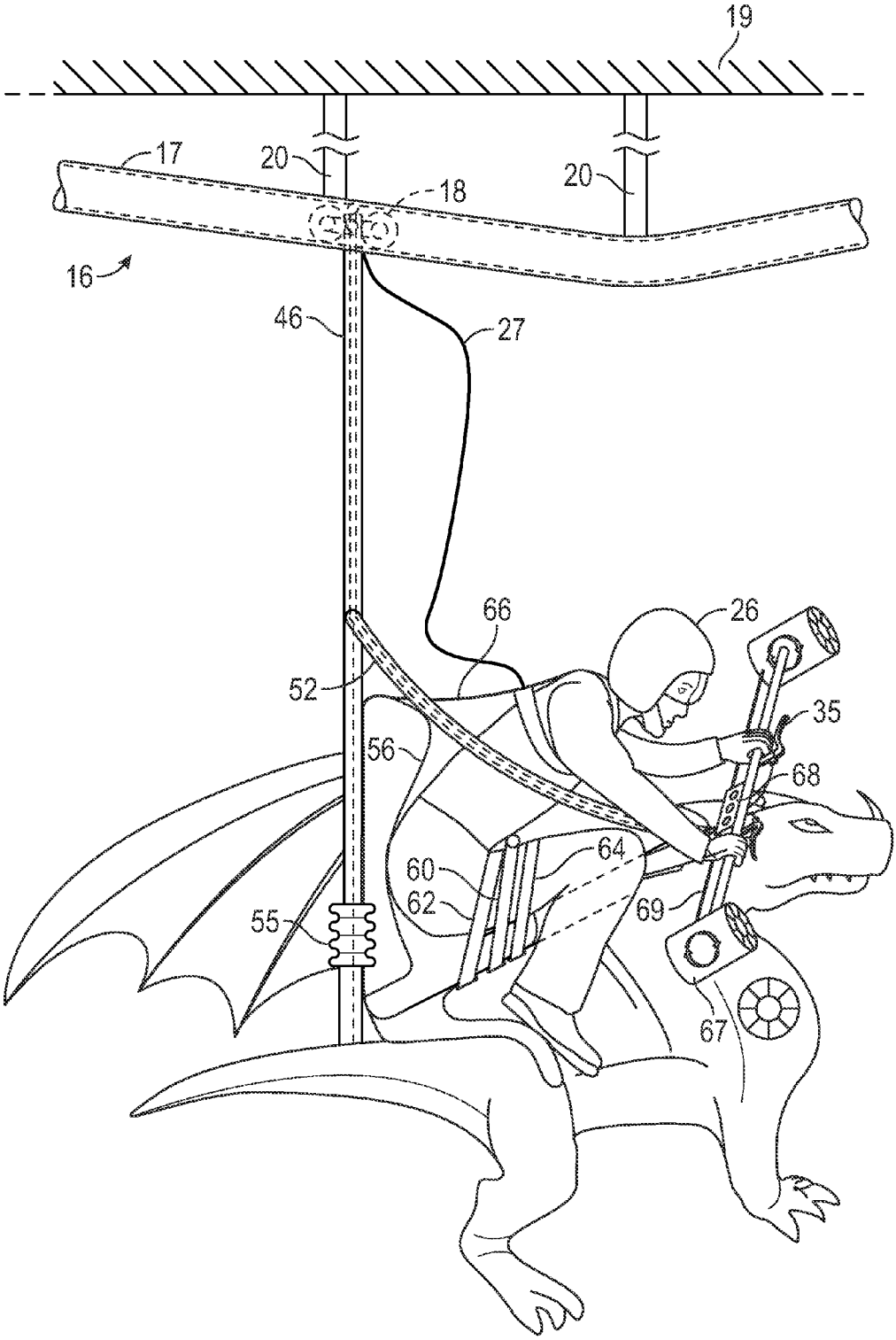

FIG. 18

HUMAN FLYING APPARATUS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application relates to, claims the benefit of and priority from, co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/552,112, filed Nov. 24, 2014, of the same title and by the same inventor, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference as if set forth in full.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This disclosure relates generally to amusement apparatuses, and more particularly to an apparatus for human flight or gliding suitable for use at a theme park, amusement park or other appropriate divertissement.

BACKGROUND

Human beings cannot fly. When we try in sports like sky diving, base-jumping, and bungee-jumping, we risk our lives.

Zip lines attempt to provide soaring, but the participant has little or no control, and the ride is over in just a few seconds. One must apply to several lines in a very large outdoor setting to get any air-time.

Indoor skydiving involves balancing on a column of super accelerated air that is uncomfortable at best. Again the ride only lasts a few seconds, and is not for all skill levels.

The aforementioned efforts to simulate a flying experience for humans are evidence of an unmet demand for a true experience of flying that is safe, comfortable, and that lasts a satisfying amount of time.

SUMMARY

A single rail system, suspended from the ceiling of a large warehouse, for example, shaped like an inverted roller coaster. Alternatively, the rail system is suspended from support members that extend upward from the ground. Integrated into the rail system is a free-moving, gravity driven wheel carriage which is attached to a bungee cord approximately 10 feet long, which is in turn attached to a soaring harness that a person wears to fly through this inverted course. The harness is equipped with a braking and steering system. It is essentially safe, indoor, flying for all ages and athletic abilities.

The apparatus of the present disclosure allows the participant to step off a platform into thin air, yet stay connected to the undulating course of the rail system. The flyer maintains a constant distance from the rail system, with some give in the bungee cord, and uses the harness and handlebar steering and braking system to glide and soar like a bird. It allows for courses that could last for many minutes at a time depending on the grade and height of the course. There is also the potential to run multiple flyers on multiple courses at staggered start times.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the present disclosure, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. **1**A is an elevated view diagrammatic illustration of a flying course with ground supports of the present disclosure.

FIG. **1**B is an elevated view diagrammatic illustration of a flying course with ceiling suspension supports of the present disclosure.

FIG. **2**A is a side view diagrammatic illustration of the flying course of FIG. **1**A.

FIG. **2**B is an elevated side view diagrammatic illustration of a detail of the flying course taken on line **4-4** of FIG. **1**A.

FIG. **2**C is a side view diagrammatic illustration of the flying course of FIG. **1**B.

FIG. **2**D is an elevated side view diagrammatic illustration of a detail of the flying course taken on line **3-3** of FIG. **1**B.

FIG. **3** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of a harness of the present disclosure.

FIG. **4** is a side elevation view of a specific alternative embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **3**.

FIG. **5** is a top plan view of a specific alternative embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **4**.

FIG. **6** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **4** depicting a flying broom harness.

FIG. **7** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **4** having one or more thrusters.

FIG. **8** is a top plan view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **7**.

FIG. **9** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **6** having one or more thrusters.

FIG. **10** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative sea turtle harness.

FIG. **11** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative comet harness. Related harnesses include planets and the moon.

FIG. **12** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative insect harness, such as a dragon fly.

FIG. **13** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative lightning bolt harness.

FIG. **14** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative flying carpet harness.

FIG. **15** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative space ship harness.

FIG. **16** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative race car harness.

FIG. **17** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative bird harness.

FIG. **18** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative dragon harness.

NOTATION AND NOMENCLATURE

Certain terms are used throughout the following description and claims to refer to particular system components. As one skilled in the art will appreciate, different companies may refer to a component by different names. This document does not intend to distinguish between components that differ in name but not function.

In the following discussion and in the claims, the terms "including" and "comprising" are used in an open-ended fashion, and thus should be interpreted to mean "including, but not limited to . . . . " Also, the term "couple" or "couples" is intended to mean either an indirect or direct connection. Thus, if a first device couples to a second device, that connection may be through a direct connection or through an indirect connection via other devices and connections.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following discussion is directed to various embodiments of the invention. Although one or more of these

embodiments may be preferred, the embodiments disclosed should not be interpreted, or otherwise used, as limiting the scope of the disclosure, including the claims. In addition, one skilled in the art will understand that the following description has broad application, and the discussion of any embodiment is meant only to be exemplary of that embodiment, and not intended to intimate that the scope of the disclosure, including the claims, is limited to that embodiment.

For convenient reference a list of the drawing reference numbers correlated to the elements to which they refer is provided.

DESCRIPTION LIST

10: designates a simulated flight system of the present disclosure.
11: designates the building or area that houses the system.
12: designates the elevated takeoff station.
13: designates the return rail.
14: designates the lower landing station.
16: designates the undulating, downward trending rail system.
17: designates the rail.
18: designates the carriage.
19: designates the optional ceiling suspension members of building **11**.
20: designates the suspension members of rail system **16**.
21: designates the safety net.
22: designates the bungee cord.
23: designates the support struts.
24: designates the adjustable handlebar and brake assembly.
25: designates the guide wires.
26: designates the user.
27: designates the safety slack cord.
28: designates the harness.
30: designates the attachment and stabilizing panel.
32: designates the wings.
33: designates the tail section of wings.
34: designates the adjustable weighted handlebar.
35: designates the handlebar brake levers.
36: designates the wheels.
38: designates the brake pads.
39: designates the support pipe.
40: designates the bend in support pipe **39**.
41: designates the support pipe pivot ball.
42: designates the support pipe clamp for bungee cord **22**.
44: designates the block.
46: designates the brake line conduit.
47: designates the brake lines.
48: designates the axle housing.
50: designates the axle.
52: designates the handlebar frame and brake line conduit **52**.
54: designates the broom fuselage.
55: designates the accordion joint attachment.
56: designates the seat.
58: designates the footrest.
60: designates the hip safety bar.
62: designates the hip seat belt.
64: designates the lap seat belt.
66: designates the shoulder safety cord.
67: designates a thruster.
68: designates thruster control panel.
69: designates control panel connection to thrusters.

FIG. **1**A of the drawings is an elevated view diagrammatic illustration of a flying course of the present disclosure. The reference numeral **10** generally designates an exemplary embodiment of a simulated flight system of the present disclosure embodying features of the present disclosure. The system **10** includes rail system **16** which preferably is installed in a building or on suitable terrain **11**, which includes the floor of the building in certain exemplary enclosed embodiments, but also contemplates open air or enclosed exemplary embodiments wherein terrain **11** may be any one of a variety of suitable surfaces such as earth, turf, asphalt, concrete, synthetic surface and so forth. In the following description, reference number **11** is used to refer all such exemplary installation embodiments interchangeably.

Rail system **16** provides rail **17** which descends at an incline from elevated takeoff station **12** and terminates at landing station **14**, which landing station **14** is at a lower elevation than takeoff station **12**. Return rail **13** connects landing station **14** to takeoff station **12** to form a rail loop. Rail **17** is preferably modularly configurable so that it can be changed to provide a variety of desired flight paths.

Carriage **18** is movably mounted to or housed in rail **17** so that, upon departing take-off station **12**, carriage **18** descends along rail **17** until it lands at landing station **14**. The direction of travel of carriage **18** along rail **17** is indicated by bold directional arrows in the drawings.

FIG. **1**B is an elevated view diagrammatic illustration of an alternative embodiment of a flying course **10** such as in FIG. **1**A, wherein rail **17** is suspended from the ceiling of a course housing **11** such that support members **20** and support struts **23** depend from the ceiling of housing **11**. This is in contrast to the arrangement of FIG. **1**A, where support members **20** are anchored to the ground and support struts **23** depend from the top of members **20** (see FIG. **2**B).

Turning now to FIG. **2**A, FIG. **2**A is a side view diagrammatic illustration of the flying course of FIG. **1**A. The present disclosure contemplates a variety of embodiments for erecting and securing rail system **16**. One exemplary embodiment provides rail system **16** erected vertically on terrain **11** with, for example, scaffolding or other suitably sturdy vertical support members. In other exemplary embodiments, particularly enclosed embodiments, rail system **16** is suspended from the ceiling of an enclosure for system **16** with suitably strong suspension members **20**. In still other exemplary embodiments, a combination of floor support members extending upward from terrain **11** and suspension members descending from the roof of an enclosure are utilized to safely secure rail system **16**.

In a specific exemplary embodiment, a plurality of upright suspension members **20**, each one of the plurality having a foot and a top, are installed at their respective feet on terrain **11**. A plurality of suspension struts **23** hang from the top of each of the plurality of suspension member **20** and are connected to rail **17** at various points along the path of rail **17**. One or more additional suspension members **19** are optionally provided in alternative exemplary embodiments. Safety net **21**, disposed under rail **17**, is particularly useful for embodiments in which rail system **16** is suspended from the ceiling of a housing.

Suspension struts **23** are preferably attached to rail **17** vertically in such a way that the path of rail **17** includes a variety of forms of loop de loops, for example, and other entertaining flight paths. Additionally, the plurality of suspension members **20** is disposed around terrain **11** horizontally to provide lateral displacement of the flight path for enhanced entertainment value. By arranging the vertical and horizontal elements of rail **17**, an entertaining ride is provided in which carriage **18** descends from takeoff station **12** and follows a wild, careening, path along rail **17**, terminating at landing

station **14**. Due to its large scale, simulated flight system **10** is preferably installed as a permanent attraction. However, specific alternative embodiments provide the plurality of suspension members and suspension struts in a modular form so that the flight paths can be changed periodically or so that system **10** can be relocated to a different site.

FIG. **2**B is an elevated side view diagrammatic illustration of a detail of the flying course taken on line **4**-**4** of FIG. **1**B. Rail **17** is shown looping around suspension members **20** by virtue of the plurality of suspension struts radiating in all the directions around the top of each suspension member **20**.

FIG. **2**C is a side view diagrammatic illustration of the flying course of FIG. **1**B.

FIG. **2**B is an elevated side view diagrammatic illustration of a detail of the flying course taken on line **3**-**3** of FIG. **2**C.

FIG. **3** is a top plan cross-sectional view of a harness of the present disclosure taken on line **3**-**3** of FIG. **4**. Carriage **18** is depicted housed in rail **17** on support pipe **46** and carriage **18** consists of an assembly that includes a pair of wheels **36** wherein one wheel of the pair of wheels **36** is disposed on one side of support pipe **39** and the other wheel of the pair of wheels **36** is disposed on the other side of support pipe **39**. The wheels of the pair of wheels **36** are rotate-ably connected to each other by axle **50** which is at least partially housed in axle housing **48**. Support pipe **39** provides bend **40** to accommodate the traverse of axle **50**. Support pipe **39** terminates at its proximate end at support ball **41**. In specific alternative embodiments support ball **41** is pivot-able to allow carriage **17** to swing on support pipe **39**.

Continuing with the description of the carriage **18** assembly, brake pads **38** selectively engage the pair of wheels **36** via actuation of brake lines **47**. Support pipe clamp **42** for bungee cord **22** is mounted on the distal end of support pipe **39**. Block **44** is mounted on the exterior of brake line conduit **46** inside rail **17** and safety slack cord **27** is fastened to block **44**.

FIG. **4** is a side elevation view indicated by line **4**-**4** of FIG. **1**A. FIG. **5** is a top plan view taken on line **5**-**5** of FIG. **4**. FIGS. **4** and **5** are discussed below together.

FIGS. **4** and **5** depict a specific exemplary embodiment of a flying apparatus with wings of the present disclosure mounted to and suspended from carriage **18** by brake line conduit **46**. The mount arrangement allows user **26** to engage carriage **18** via a manually operated brake line to slow down or stop carriage **18**. Depending from brake line conduit **46** is elastic member **22**, such as a bungee cord, which is attached distally to attachment and stabilizing panel **30** of the apparatus, or, with particular specific harnesses, is connected distally to accordion joint **55**. A first adjustable handlebar and brake assembly **24** is also connected to brake line conduit **46** and also provides a brake line conduit from the user's **26** hands to conduit **46** and ultimately to carriage **18**.

First assembly **24** extends rearward and above user **26** from a first end of handlebar cross member **34**. A second assembly **24** extends rearward and above user **26** from a second end of handlebar cross member **34** (see FIG. **5**). A first hand brake assembly **35** is mounted to the first end of handlebar cross member **34** and a second hand brake assembly is mounted to the second end of handlebar **35**. First and second hand brake assemblies **35** provide braking to carriage **18** via brake line conduits **24** and **46**.

Guide wires **25** connect brake line conduit **46** to user **26** at a front end and to the harness at a rear end to provide stability. Safety slack cord **27** extends with slack from rail **17** to panel **30**. Harness **28** provides a plurality of support members extending from panel **30** to wings **32**.

FIG. **6** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the invention. The flying apparatus is the embodiment of FIG. **6** is a flying broom. Broom fuselage **54** has a top and a bottom and is suspended to brake line conduit **46** from the top via accordion joint attachment **55**. Handlebar frame and brake line conduit **52** connects to and communicates with conduit **46** and houses a manually operated brake line that communicates with carriage **18** via conduit **46**. Seat **56** is mounted on the top of fuselage **54** in front of conduit **46**. Footrest **58** is mounted to the bottom of fuselage **54** opposite seat **56**. Hip safety bar **60** is mounted to fuselage **54** and extends upward to secure user **26** in seat **56**. Hip seat belt **62** is attached to fuselage **54** and wraps around the waist of user **26**. Lap seat belt **64** is attached to fuselage **54** and wraps around the legs of user **26**. Shoulder safety cord **66** extends between and connects user **26** to seat **56**.

Alternative embodiments provide pneumatic thrusters **67** to provide forward or directional thrust for more speed and enhanced steering.

FIG. **7** is a side elevation view of a specific alternative embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **4**. FIG. **8** is a top plan view of a specific alternative embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **5**. FIGS. **7** and **8** are discussed herein together. In the alternative embodiment of FIGS. **7** and **8**, one or more thruster **67** is pivotally mounted to handlebar **34** to provide optional forward thrusting force for increased speed. Steering is enhanced by pivoting thruster **67** to change the direction of thrust using control panel **68** on handlebar **34**. Control panel **68** connects to thrusters **67** with connection **69**.

FIG. **9** is a side elevation view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of the embodiment of FIG. **6**. In the alternative embodiment of FIG. **9**, handle bar **24** is proximally mounted to fuselage **54**, and one or more thruster **67** is pivotally mounted to handlebar **24** as well as distally on fuselage **54** to provide optional forward thrusting force for increased speed. Steering is enhanced by pivoting thruster **67** to change the direction of thrust.

The decorative and entertaining design of harnesses for a simulated flying system **10** of the present disclosure is limited only by the imagination. Examples of decorative and entertaining harnesses are provided in FIGS. **10**-**18**.

FIG. **10** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative sea turtle harness.

FIG. **11** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative comet harness. Related harnesses include planets and the moon.

FIG. **12** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative insect harness, such as a dragon fly.

FIG. **13** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative lightning bolt harness.

FIG. **14** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative flying carpet harness.

FIG. **15** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative space ship harness.

FIG. **16** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative race car harness.

FIG. **17** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative bird harness.

FIG. **18** is a diagrammatic illustration of an alternative dragon harness.

Alternative decorative harnesses of FIGS. **10**-**18** are illustrated as including one or more optional thrusters **67**, thruster controller **68** and connection **69**.

Additional fanciful harness configurations include but are not limited to:

Sea Creatures: Dolphin, Shark, Whale, Sea Turtle, Sting Ray, even a Surfer on a Wave harness.

Fairytale Creatures: Fairies, Dragons, Flying Carpet, Basilisk, Hippogriff, Gryphon, Gnomes, Elves, Unicorns, Genies, Hobbits, Pegasus, even a Bubble that would enclose the rider.

Desert Creatures: Lions, Tigers, Bears, Elephant, Leopard, Warthog, Hyena, Water-Buffalo, Giraffe, Rhino and so on.

Forest Creatures: Bears, Elk, Moose, Deer, Badgers, Beavers, Eagles, and so forth.

Birds: Eagle, Condor, Egret, Hawk, Falcon, Barn Owl, Swift, Cardinal, Sparrow, Hummingbird. For progressively easier runs suitable for younger or first time riders, for example, the smaller the bird the smaller the ride.

Garden Creatures: Butterflies, Birds, Moths, Frogs, Lizards, Wasps, Bees, Squirrels, Earthworms, and so forth.

Weather: Storm clouds, Lightning bolts, Stars, Planets, Moons, the Winds and the like.

Jungle Creatures: Apes, Monkeys, Panthers, Snakes, and so forth.

Insects: Giant Ants, Butterflies, Moths, Beetles, and the like.

Vehicles: Planes, Spaceships, Cars, Motorcycles, Tanks, Jeeps, Ornithopters, and so forth.

Fantasy/Science Fiction: Aliens, Zombies, Vampires, Werewolves, the Undead, Evil Pirates, and so forth.

Additional harness forms include licensed figures from film and television tie-ins:

Super Heroes: Superman®, Batman®, Wonder Woman® and her Invisible Plane, Spiderman®, Storm (X-Men®), and so on.

Harry Potter®: the Broom Fuselage, Hippogriffs, Nargels, Dementors, Dragons, and so on.

Aladdin®: The Genie, the Flying Carpet, and so on.

Transformers®: Cars that become Robots as you fly!

Star Wars®: X-Wing fighters, Tie Fighters, Millennium Falcon, and the like.

Star Trek®: The Enterprise, the Galileo Seven, and so on.

Futurama®

Battlestar Gallactica®

Shrek®

Cars®

Dora the Explorer®

The present disclosure contemplates at least two types of harnesses **28**, one type is a suspension harness wherein the harness fastens to the back of the user and the user is suspended from the harness, and a second type is a ride-able harness, wherein the user straddles, sits or otherwise mounts the harness.

Many modifications and other embodiments of the system and apparatus described herein will come to mind to one skilled in the art to which this disclosure pertains having the benefit of the teachings presented in the foregoing descriptions and the associated drawings. Therefore, it is to be understood that the disclosure is not to be limited to the specific embodiments disclosed and that modifications and other embodiments are intended to be included within the scope of the appended claims. Although specific terms are employed herein, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for achieving simulated personal flight, the method comprising the steps of:

a. providing a support structure;

b. providing a rail attached to the support structure and having an elevated takeoff terminus and a landing terminus to provide a path of travel from the takeoff terminus to the landing terminus;

c. providing a carriage moveably coupled to the rail;

d. providing a user-operated means for braking the carriage;

e. providing a brake conduit depending from the carriage and connected to the user-operated means for braking the carriage;

f. depending from the carriage a harness for securing a user;

g. providing an elastic connector connecting the brake conduit to the harness,

h. securing a user to the harness at the takeoff terminus; and

i. following the path of travel from the takeoff terminus to the landing terminus.

2. The method of claim **1**, further comprising providing one or more thrusters pivotally mounted to the harness and further comprising the step of using the one or more thrusters to modify the manner of following the path of travel.

3. The method of claim **2**, further providing a control panel to operate the one or more thrusters.

4. The method of claim **1**, wherein the path of travel comprises one or more curves.

5. The method of claim **1**, wherein the provided harness is decorative.

6. The method of claim **1**, further comprising providing a return rail that connects the landing terminus to the takeoff terminus to return the harness to the takeoff terminus from the landing terminus.

7. The method of claim **6**, further comprising the step of returning the harness to the takeoff terminus from the landing terminus with the return rail, whereby a user secured in the harness effectuates a user-controlled descent from the takeoff terminus to the landing terminus, exits the harness at the landing terminus whereupon the empty harness is returned to the takeoff terminus.

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